

REMARKS

Applicant requests favorable reconsideration and allowance of this application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Claims 1-3, 5-8, and 10-12 are pending in this application, with Claim 1 being independent. Claims 4 and 9 have been canceled without prejudice.

Claims 1, 5-8, and 10 have been amended, and new Claim 12 has been added. Applicant submits that support for the amendments can be found in the original disclosure, and therefore no new matter has been added. For example, the amendments to Claim 1 are supported at least in original Claim 4 and at page 6, lines 20-26 of the specification.

Claims 1 and 2 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 7,324,093 (Gettemy et al.). Claims 3, 7 and 11 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gettemy et al. in view of U.S. Patent Publication No. 2006/0157659 (MacGregor et al.). Claim 9 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gettemy et al. in view of MacGregor et al., and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 7,226,278 (Nason et al.). Claim 4 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gettemy et al. in view of MacGregor et al., and further in view of U.S. Patent Publication No. 2006/0017692 (Wehrenberg et al.). Claim 8 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gettemy et al. in view of MacGregor et al. and Wehrenberg et al., and further in view of U.S. Patent Publication No. 2004/0201579 (Graham). Claims 5 and 6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Gettemy et al. in view of MacGregor et al., and further in view of Graham. Claim 10 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §

103(a) as being unpatentable over Gettemy et al. in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,762,929 (Sawyer).

Applicant respectfully traverses these rejections for the reasons discussed below.

As recited in independent Claim 1, the present invention includes, *inter alia*, rigidity adjusting means for changing at least partially a rigidity of a flexible sheet-like member, and first detection means for detecting that the sheet-like member is not placed on a surface having a certain degree of rigidity, wherein the rigidity adjusting means is not controlled to ensure rigidity necessary for the sheet-like member unless, at least, the first detection means detects that the sheet-like member is not placed on a surface having the certain degree of rigidity. According to these features, the rigidity adjusting means is not controlled when the sheet-like member is placed on a surface having a certain degree of rigidity (i.e., on a surface that makes use of the rigidity adjusting means unnecessary), and therefore power consumption can be reduced.

Applicant submits that the cited art fails to disclose or suggest at least the above-mentioned features of Claim 1. Gettemy et al. fails to teach or suggest at least the first detecting means for detecting that the sheet like member is not placed on a surface having a certain degree of rigidity, as recited in Claim 1. Further, Gettemy et al. also fails to teach or suggest the rigidity adjusting means to be controlled.

MacGregor et al. discloses control of a shape memory alloy but fails to teach or suggest the use and control of the shape memory alloy in an apparatus for effecting at least one of display and input. Further, MacGregor et al. also fail to teach or suggest at least the first detection means recited in Claim 1.

Wehrenberg et al. discloses a portable device including an accelerometer and discloses in paragraph [0109] that movement of the portable device is detected using the accelerometer.

However, the accelerometer is used only for detecting movement of the portable device and therefore is not used for detecting that a flexible sheet-like member is not placed on a surface having a certain degree of rigidity. Further, the accelerometer is used for detecting the movement (state) of the portable device itself, thus failing to detect a relationship between the portable device and a member outside the portable device. That is the accelerometer used in Wehrenberg et al. is different in function from the first detection means recited in Claim 1. Wehrenberg et al. further fails to teach or suggest the use of a rigidity adjusting means to be controlled for the portable device.

Accordingly, Applicant submits that even if Gettemy et al., MacGregor et al., and Wehrenberg et al. are combined, they fail to teach or suggest at least the first detection means of Claim 1, the feature wherein the rigidity adjusting means is not controlled to ensure rigidity necessary for a sheet-like member unless, at least, the first detection means detects that the sheet-like member is not place on a surface having a certain degree of rigidity.

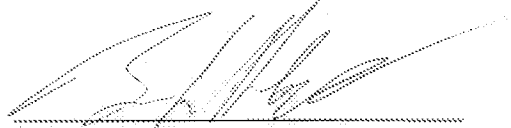
The other cited art fails to remedy the above-noted deficiencies of Gettemy et al., MacGregor et al., and Wehrenberg et al.

In view of the foregoing, Applicant submits that independent Claim 1 is patentable over the art of record. The dependent claims are patentable for at least the same reasons as Claim 1, as well as for the additional features they recite.

For the foregoing reasons, this application is believed to be in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and an early Notice of Allowance are requested.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Brian L. Klock', is written over a horizontal dotted line.

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